

# Evidence does not support statin use for conditions other than heart disease

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Despite studies suggesting benefits for conditions beyond cardiovascular disease (CVD), the evidence does not support revising current statin prescribing guidelines. Findings from an evidence review and meta-analysis are published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Statins are a group of medicines commonly used to lower cholesterol levels in the blood and their benefits for reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke are well-established. Some studies have suggested that statins may help patients with non-CVD conditions, but the [evidence](#) is not as clear.

Researchers led by the University of Edinburgh analyzed results from 256 studies that had investigated the benefits of taking statins for 278 non-CVD conditions. They found that statins can help to prevent deaths from kidney disease, which is already recognized in clinical guidelines, but there is no [clear evidence](#) that statins can help improve kidney function. Researchers also found evidence that statins can help slow cancer progression, but further investigation is needed. Further investigation is also needed to determine how statins affect COBD disease progression and Alzheimer's disease.

According to the study authors, the lack of convincing evidence of an association between statins and non-CVD outcomes supports leaving the current recommendations unchanged.

**More information:** *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2018).  
<http://annals.org/aim/article/doi/10.7326/M18-0808>

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